



# Fact Sheet

South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control • [www.scdhec.gov](http://www.scdhec.gov)

## *Rubella*

<b>What Is Rubella?</b>	<p>Rubella is a contagious disease caused by a virus. It is usually a mild fever and rash illness in adults and children. For many years, Rubella was considered as a type of measles.</p> <p>The most serious effects of rubella result from infection during the first trimester of pregnancy. Rubella infection can affect all organs in the developing fetus and cause miscarriage, fetal death, and congenital abnormalities.</p>
<b>What are the symptoms?</b>	<p>In children, a rash is usually the first symptom experienced. In adults and older children the rash is often preceded by a low fever, swollen lymph nodes and upper respiratory symptoms. The rash usually lasts for 3 days.</p> <p>As many as 50% of people infected will not experience any symptoms.</p>
<b>How is Rubella treated?</b>	<p>Rubella is caused by a virus, so antibiotics will not help.</p> <p>Most people recover completely on their own. The best treatment is supportive treatment, which includes rest, drinking plenty of fluids and over-the-counter medications to reduce the fever and headache.</p>
<b>How do people catch this disease?</b>	<p>Rubella is spread primarily from person to person by airborne respiratory droplets. Persons with rubella are most infectious when the rash is erupting, but can shed virus from a week before to a week after the start of the rash.</p>
<b>What can be done to stop the spread of this disease?</b>	<p>The Rubella vaccine (MMR) provides permanent protection against the disease. The vaccine is recommended for all infants at 12 months of age. It is also a requirement to attend day care or school in South Carolina. Since the widespread use of the rubella vaccine in 1969, the number of cases of the disease in the United States has decreased by 99%.</p>

**SOUTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROL**

Region 7

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